



Tip Sheet

Caregiver Input Forms

Caregivers have valuable information that is critical to help inform decisions by the staffing teams and the court. It is important to provide the written Caregiver Input forms for court hearings even if you plan to attend the judicial hearing in person. Partner families are the experts on children living in their homes.

Partner Family Team Member Role:

- Provide input into the development of the child's case plan and other decisions made by the team.
- Share perspectives with members and the courts with respect to the best interest of children in their care.
- Provide children opportunities in the home and through other activities to learn and practice skills needed for independent living. Life skills topics include: food preparation, money management, consumer awareness, personal hygiene, housekeeping, accessing health care services, transportation, job seeking, education, study skills and interpersonal relationship building.

Judicial Review Requirements:

- A statement from the foster parent or legal custodian providing any material evidence concerning the return of the child to the parent or parents.
- If the child has reached 13 years of age but is not yet 18 years of age, a statement from the caregiver on the progress the child has made in acquiring independent living skills.

Tips for foster parents:

- Stick with the facts and try to keep emotion out of the written Caregiver Input documentation.
- When possible, take a balanced approach by acknowledging positives as well as the challenges.
- Be aware that copies of Caregiver Input forms filed with the court are provided to all parties to the case.
- Provide the completed Caregiver Input form to the Family Care Counselor at least a week prior to the scheduled hearing date. You can provide a copy to the Partner Family Advocate and the assigned CLS attorney in addition to the Family Care Counselor.

Resources:

- Links to the Caregiver Input form:
 - Electronic version
<http://www.pfsf.org/wp-content/uploads/Caregiver-Input-187-E101216-On-screen.pdf>
 - Paper version
<http://www.pfsf.org/wp-content/uploads/Caregiver-Input-187-E101216-By-Hand.pdf>
- PSF's Partner Family Advocate, Shelia Davis 352-244-1534, is available to assist.
- Children's Legal Services assigned attorney is available to assist.
- Family Care Counselor and Supervisor are available to assist.

Foster parents also have the right, in addition to providing a written statement, to address the court with any information relevant to the best interest of the child.